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The Maine Forest

Maine Forest Service, DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, CONSERVATION & FORESTRY

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Maine is the most heavily forested state in the nation with 90% (17.8 million acres) of its land base growing trees.¹ Maine's forests provide many benefits to the state, the region, and the nation:

- a home to more than 20,000 species of wildlife;²
- an economic resource that directly employs nearly 23,000 people;³
- an annual \$1.7 billion contribution to Maine's Gross State Product through forest-based manufacturing;⁴
- a renewable energy resource for wood-burning electricity generating plants - as well as fuelwood for thousands of homes. Wood provides over 20% of electrical needs and 25% of Maine's energy needs.⁵
- the energy for approximately 20% of the electricity used in Maine.⁶
- a green landscape for our homes and communities;
- \$1.15 billion in revenues from forest-related recreation and tourism activities;⁷ and,
- the largest and most diverse forest products industry of the states in the Northern Forest region.⁸

Additional Facts about Maine's Forests

- 95% of Maine timberland is privately owned, with small non-industrial private forest landowners holding more than 6.2 million acres.⁹
- Over 7.6 million acres of forestland are certified as well-managed.¹⁰
- Maine's forested watersheds provide clean water that fills rivers, streams, lakes, and

wetlands, sustains fisheries, and flows from faucets of homes and businesses. Maine's forests are critically important to the supply of clean and affordable drinking water.¹¹

■ Maine's forest industry harvests 6 - 7 million cords of wood each year to build homes, make furniture, paper, and other products.¹² Replanting of trees is rarely necessary, as Maine's forests reseed themselves naturally with an abundance of trees.

■ Of the 65 tree species in Maine's forests, only 20 are primarily used commercially for paper, lumber, and other products.¹³ These include:

- Spruce, fir, and hemlock for structural lumber and paper production;
- Eastern white pine for interior (finish) wood;
- Cedar for its weathering qualities; and
- Hardwoods, such as maple, birch, and oak, for flooring, furniture, paper production, and dozens of specialty wood products.

Tree and Forest Facts:

- Trees are a renewable resource. Forest products are also recyclable and biodegradable.¹⁴
- Each American uses the equivalent of a 100-foot tall tree each year.¹⁵
- The average single-family home (2,000 sq. ft.) can contain 15,824 board feet of lumber and up to 10,893 square feet of panel products.¹⁶
- A large healthy tree may have as many as 200,000 leaves on it. Over a 60-year life span, such a tree would grow and shed 3,600 pounds of leaves, returning about 70% of their nutrients back to the soil.¹⁷
- A tree can be a natural air conditioner. The evaporation from a single large tree can produce the

cooling effect of 10 room size air conditioners operating 20 hours a day.¹⁸

✎ Sustainably managed forests provide insurance against pollution from roads, sewers and storm water runoff. Put simply, the surface and ground waters flowing out of forests are less contaminated than the rain and snow that falls on the forest.¹⁹

And there's more...

✎ To grow a pound of wood, a tree uses 1.47 pounds of carbon dioxide and gives off 1.07 pounds of oxygen. An acre of trees might grow 4,000 pounds of wood in a year, using 5,880 pounds of carbon dioxide and giving off 4,280 pounds of oxygen in the process. Each person needs 365 pounds of oxygen every year.²⁰

✎ For every pound of wood which decays (or burns), the process reverses: 1.07 pounds of oxygen is used up and 1.47 pounds of carbon dioxide is put back into the air.²¹

✎ Each year, paper is used to publish more than 2 billion books, 350 million magazines, and 24 billion newspapers in the United States.²²

✎ Over 57% of all paper consumed in this country was recovered for recycling in 2008.²³

♻ Over half the recycled material used for paper comes from recovered paper and from wood wastes left by lumber manufacturing.²⁴

♻ Paper can be recycled 4 to 5 times before the fibers lose their strength and wash out. New fibers added to the old can lengthen this recycling process.²⁵

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